

**South Lanarkshire College
Human Resources Committee (Board of Management)
Held on 13th May 2021**

Present Chris McDowall
Aileen McKechnie
Rose Harkness

In Attendance Gary McIntosh
Andy Kerr
Stella McManus
Brian Keegan

1. Apologies None

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

Mr. Kerr declared his membership of the Board of the Scottish Funding Council and the Lanarkshire Board. Ms. McKechnie declared her membership of The Lanarkshire Board.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Approved.

4. Human Resources Report

Members to note the link to the Fortnightly Staff Update in the HR Report. It was agreed that future Staff Updates will be sent directly to Board members.

Members discussed the relevant strategic aims for the Committee and it was agreed to lift elements from a lower tier of aims e.g. people centred. Using several of these lower tier aims will be more meaningful and more appropriate.

Headcount

Members noted the slight movement over the quarter with 6 new hires and 8 leavers.

Members noted the 10 year rolling absence figures which showed long-term sickness remaining the key driver of overall absence figures – 90% of absences driven by absences of longer than 3 weeks. The impact of COVID on this was noted.

Health & Well Being

Members were advised that COVID lockdowns and the impact of factors, including home schooling, shielding, blended learning and lack of face to face and physical activity, has significantly impacted the wellbeing of the College's employees and students. The College Leadership Team continue to review the situation, discuss issues and deliver tailored solutions.

Mental Health

Members noted that the Mental Health Working Group continues to support the wellbeing of our college community and the College makes use of our social media platforms to signpost the support available to employees and students.

Members welcomed the proposal to increase, incrementally, the number of Mental Health First Aiders from 6 to 36. This ambition will target specific areas for training e.g. HR, Facilities, Curriculum Managers, IT and Student Services. This programme will raise awareness and through early intervention it will signpost where to get appropriate help quickly.

Members noted the HSE Organisational Stress Risk Assessment is in train and is anonymous to encourage participation, and the Short Life Working Group which supports it is made up of a cross section of College staff and supported by Trade Union colleagues.

Employee Journey and Engagement

Members were updated on the process to review the employee journey. This work is ongoing and at an early stage and should help to improve the employee experience.

Members noted the positive feedback from the issues of the Fortnightly Staff Update and the intention to connect the Board to staff through this communication.

Action:

Board members to receive a copy of the Fortnightly Staff Update.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk to the Board

Deadline: 24th May, 2021

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Members noted that most Equality outcomes recommended for the period 2017-2021 had been achieved; that the Public Sector Equality Duty report was to be published on the College website imminently; the Gender Pay Gap 2020 report would also be published imminently and highlighted an issue with occupational segregation.

Learning & Development

Members noted the staff training programmes in progress and completed, including TQFE, a Professional Development Award in Teaching and Assessor Verifier Awards. The ambition is to increase the number of completed programmes but the ongoing feedback is good across range of staff development activities.

Performance

Members were advised that a Team development exercise with the College Leadership Team is planned and a refreshed Careers Review process for all staff is in train.

Employee & Industrial Relations

Members noted JNC updates on reviews of contracts of employment and job descriptions taking place across a range of staff in the College. The low number of employee relations activities were noted.

Members enquired about the scope for sector-wide benchmarking (eg. on absenteeism, complaints, etc.).

Members were advised that the Support staff settlement for 2020/21 has been concluded and the industrial relations dispute with EIS-FELA has been suspended with an agreement reached to satisfy all concerned.

Members noted the progress with the HR Policy and Procedures process.

Action:

Consideration to be given to benchmarking across the sector.

Responsibility: Head of HR

Deadline: 9th September 2021

Maintenance of Accreditations

Members noted the key actions identified to maintain Accreditation with Investors in People, Investors in People Health and Wellbeing and Leaders in Diversity. It is anticipated the short-life working group tasked with this work will be concluded by 30th September 2021.

5. Health and Safety Report

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were outlined. The following highlights were noted:

- The College is now able to operate at Covid Level 3 but our student numbers are still only around 11% of our total cohort. We will increase to 29% but in a managed way.
- The work undertaken to modify the campus to create a COVID-secure environment – including creating larger, partitioned rooms and more touch free door openers. Regular communications with staff are taking place preparing staff for a return to campus.
- Free lateral flow testing is now available – all staff and students are encouraged to undertake twice weekly testing.

6. Committee Remit

Following discussion about the lower tier elements and bullet points listed the amendments were accepted.

Decision: New Remit agreed – to be tabled at the next full Board Meeting.

Responsibility: Interim Clerk to the Board

Deadline: 1st June, 2021

7. Horizon Scanning

Most issues covered during the meeting. Other possibilities:

- HR to check with CDN's HR Network to identify activity that would allow SLC to partner with groups not well represented.
- Transitioning back to campus for the "new normal"; supporting staff absences and the impact of COVID on Mental Health
- The need to be thoughtful about industrial relations and sectoral risks, such as Brexit and post-Covid recovery.

8. Any other Competent Business

Members were advised that the College had been successful – one of only 2 colleges and 2 Universities across the system - as participants on the pilot for the GBV Charter. The College will be part of the pilot process between May and November 2021.

Members reported that papers were improving with each Committee.

There being no further competent business, the Chair closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance.